



# Edu News

THE SOE DIGEST



“Be a Leader  
of Education  
Reform”

## EDITORS' NOTE

Greetings! We are pleased to share the second issue of Edu News, the biannual publication of the Syed Ahsan Ali and Syed Maratib Ali School of Education (SOE).

EDU News is a journal dedicated to serving the community at LUMS and beyond. It is filled with plenty of stories and events covered by our student contributors from the MPhil batch of 2020 with the goal to inspire, teach, challenge, encourage our readers. There is something for everybody in our newsletter and we hope that we have been able to provide a snapshot of what we have been up to over the past year.

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## JICA: Providing a Model for Non-Formal Education

*Author: Hamna Tariq*

On Feb 27, 2019 SOE hosted a team from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) under its series 'Models of Educational Innovation. This invites practitioners to present innovative interventions and discuss challenges of design, implementation, and evaluation. It also identifies possible areas of research and larger policy implications.

Ms. Chiho Ohashi (Chief Advisor) and Mr. Sajjad Haider (Programme Specialist, Policy and Research) from the JICA team presented the scenario of education in Pakistan and the challenge of out-of-school children in Pakistan.

A major policy concern is thinking about integrating these children into schools by providing increased access and quality. Loosely structured non-formal education which occurs outside of formal schools has been considered as a solution. However, the development of a curriculum which is relevant and responds to the needs of these children has been a major concern. The solution by JICA was in the form of an initiative called Advancing Quality Alternative Learning (AQAL).

The AQAL-JICA team is acting as technical support to the education sector for the government of Pakistan. AQAL brings these children to non-formal schools and prepares them to become valuable members of society. The AQAL team has designed a curriculum that is relevant to the needs of learners especially for out-of-school children.



The assumption on which the development of the curriculum was based was that children will be over-age and will come with some existing knowledge since they will have the practical experience and exposure that comes with age. Therefore, it was assumed that teachers can build on the existing knowledge and then impart skills which are developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant and address language and age diversity within the students. This is an accelerated basic education program that allows the students to complete primary school education in three years.

Primary subjects taught by in AQAL project are English, Mathematics, and Urdu while SLOs of Social Studies, Islamic studies, life skills, and Science are integrated within those primary subjects. After the completion of this cycle student can be integrated into the next class in any formal school.

The curriculum designed by JICA has been approved by Sindh and Baluchistan governments. This model is currently being piloted in Islamabad in ten centers and in Sindh in 101 schools developed by USAID. A total of 400 learners are currently enrolled in AQAL while research on the impact of this project is ongoing and set to be released by the end of the year.

# Teach for Pakistan: An Educational Reform Movement

*Author: Habiba Malik*



On March 27, 2019 SOE hosted Khadija Shahper Bakhtiar, Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Teach For Pakistan (TFP).

Teach For Pakistan is a not-for-profit organization that is building a national movement to end educational poverty. It provides the nation's top graduates the opportunity and support to teach for two years in low-income communities through a structured fellowship, and develop the skills and convictions to lead education reform from across social and economic systems.

Khadija Shahper Bakhtiar first had the idea to launch TFP when she was studying as a Fulbright scholar at the Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California, Berkeley.

She came across Alumni of Teach For America, the program that pioneered a model that has since been adapted to 49+ countries. Inspired by the journey, impact and conviction of Teach For America alumni to lead change in their context, Khadija returned to Pakistan to launch a similar model.

Currently operating out of Islamabad, in partnership with the Federal Directorate of Education, the organization's 120 Fellows and Alumni have taught and changed the lives of over 6,000 children across 48 government, low-cost private and non-profit schools, and benefited over 20,000 community members through parental engagement, community development initiatives and training other school teachers.

The interactive Q&A session addressed issues of fellow retention, need for impact evaluation of the project, students' cognitive development, post fellowship impact, and operationalization of the framework.

Given the impact they are witnessing in schools and at the system level, the organization is aiming to grow in numbers aggressively in coming years and scale nationwide. While informing the audience about the fellowship program, Ms Shahper elaborated that the organisation places fellows in under-performing schools in select communities, prioritizing long term relationships with placement schools for a greater impact on the communities. Schools are selected based on household income level, student needs and the condition of the school.

Ms. Shahper added that through TFP they intend to transform systems of educational inequity and promote excellence in education by leveraging promising young talent to create a multiplier effect on the education system.

# Maktab: A Model School

Author: Ahsan Nazir

On April 11, 2019 SOE hosted Dr. Irfanullah Chaudary, founder of Maktab school. Dr. Irfan is also an Associate Professor, University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore, and alumnus of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He elaborated on the journey of Maktab, a private co-educational school (preschool to A-levels) offering unique academic opportunities to a small, highly motivated and diverse student body.

Maktab was founded in 2012 in a two-room school on a farm in the outskirts of Lahore. It ran with four students for three months. It was closed for construction in January 2013 and reopened in March 2015. The school now caters to the needs of approximately 300 students, and is situated on a pollution-free 3.5-acre campus right next to the scenic Lahore Zoo Safari. The campus boasts a ten-thousand book library, two swimming pools, an auditorium, a 400m jogging track, and playing fields.

The school draws its inspiration from many roots – Muhammad Iqbal, Alexander von Humboldt, John Holt, John Dewey, and Noam Chomsky. Iqbal's verse, سراپا لذتِ بال آزمائی which means "the pleasure of struggling against headwinds", captures the essence of the school's motto.

Dr. Chaudary's vision for the school is to have a small, supportive intense environment to nurture the innate abilities of the students. The school aspires to cultivate a culture that fosters introspection, honesty, empathy, tolerance, curiosity, and hard work, where the students have control over their own learning experience. It focuses on the wholesome development of its students in terms of human and moral values, respecting the environment, academics and integrating sports in their regular routine.



While talking about the problems of the current education system, he said that education cannot be standardised and mass-produced in 'school systems'. It should cater to the needs of individual students as every individual will have their different needs.

The QnA session catered to queries regarding the model of the school and its curriculum. ELM students asked about the importance of infrastructure in the academic success of students. Various other topics were discussed regarding the targeted population of the school, curriculum design, teacher training, and the feasibility of the school's framework in the long term.

***"Maktab is a truly unique educational experience, yet our hope is that such Maktab should exist all across Pakistan."***





## Evaluating the Effectiveness and Impact of Educational Programs and Projects

*Author: Ahsan Nazir*

### **Speaker: Dr. Denise Chalmers, Professor Emeritus, University of Western Australia**

On February 4, 2019, Dr. Denise Chalmers led a seminar on 'Evaluating the Effectiveness and Impact of Educational Programs and Projects' attended by LUMS faculty and students.

Dr. Chalmers is a Professor Emeritus in the field of higher education teaching and learning at the University of Western Australia. She has over 25 years of experience of leadership in higher education, leading two university centres of Teaching and Learning.

The session aimed to address the issue of ineffective evaluation of educational programs. Dr. Chalmers discussed how often thoughtful consideration is not given to appropriate evidence of the effectiveness of the program or to the recipients that will be impacted by the

program when it is being designed. She unpacked effective ways of collecting evidence which can be collected at strategic points throughout a program to inform all stakeholders - students, teachers, and administrators – on the progress of the program and its achievement of intended and unintended outcomes.

Dr. Chalmers emphasized the importance of specifying the recipients of the educational program, knowing whether the program addresses the students, teachers, institutions or systems helps in the evaluation of the project. She also emphasized the importance of understanding the input, process, output, and outcome of the project. To elucidate this point she shared her own projects with the audience, providing a clear distinction among input, process, output, and outcome.

Moreover, she talked about keeping the project feasible and realistic, the importance of teamwork and team building, and communicating with other stakeholders. In the end, she emphasized on reviewing the project regularly, adapting to changing circumstances and making modifications accordingly.

The session was interactive with an activity in-between where the audience had to discuss among themselves what they thought education programs should demonstrate and what indicators to use for gauging impact. This followed a Q & A session comprised of rich exchanges between the Vice-Chancellor, Deans, faculty, and students. Dr. Ahmad addressed the importance of professional development programs; other important topics were also discussed including problems of identifying issues at the organizational level, the need for allowing development and teacher resistance to reforms. The session witnessed an overwhelming turnout by the LUMS community, curious to learn about educational programs and the ways to make them more effective.

# The Great Divide: Past Practices and Current Needs of Learners of

*Author: Hamna Tariq*

## **Speaker: Mr. Shad Moarif, Founder Karismath**

On April 26, 2019 SOE invited Shad Moarif, the designer and developer of Karismath, an interface which mediates between mathematics concepts. The learner uses imagery instead of numbers so that learners move to an abstract level of mathematical thinking. It makes concepts visible, accessible and usable to all. Learners go beyond the numerical form and explore visual constructs of concepts in their minds. Mr. Moarif is an Aga Khan Foundation Scholar and a Harvard graduate in Psychology. He has been highly influential for his work on the understanding, diagnosis and remediation of Dyslexia in Pakistan. He established the first remedial center for Language Learning Difficulties in 1986 in Pakistan.

The discussion at the event was developed around the way mathematics is taught in classrooms reflecting on how society and culture shaped attitudes towards schooling and education in general. Throughout the session, Mr. Moarif posted open-ended questions to generate discussion.

Dr. Moarif initiated the session with a video that helped the audience understand numeracy-related



challenges faced by teachers and students in low-cost schools. The session gained momentum when he explained how visual representations integrated into mathematics curriculum make it easier for students to grasp the concepts irrespective of their social and cultural backgrounds.

Mr. Moarif highlighted the issue of the generational divide over teaching and learning of rules and reason in Mathematics. Elaborating on the problem, he said that there are many ways this divide is manifested. Rote learning of rules in Mathematics leads to a situation where there is no understanding of the rationale. The divide, thus, is formed by rule-oriented learning of Mathematics which has the potential to generate academic achievement without triggering the active curiosity which an inquiring mind needs to further understand the concepts. Lastly, the divide also reflects generational changes in learner's mindset.

According to Dr. Moarif, learners' experiences with immersive technology activate higher-level cognitive processes which conflict with conventional ways of teaching that do not correspond with how students in the 21st century learn.



### 3 | FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



***Dr. Tayyaba Tamim is an Associate Professor at LUMS School of Education (SOE). She has led and worked on several funded research projects, in collaboration with USAID, British Council and the World Bank. Her research is grounded in issues of social justice and equity in education, across language, gender, caste and religion.***

***Dr Tamim has been a part of many unique and innovative projects with the inaugural batch at the SOE and is experimenting with non-conventional teaching methods and pedagogies.***

*Interviewed by Jannat Karim Khan*

***Q. Could you please share your collaborations with the MPhil students at SOE?***

There are many things that are going on. Most of the collaborations are happening with students are in research work and projects. There are three projects in total that around 15-20 students are collaborating on. This has a lot of benefits for the students and the instructors. For me working with students has been very enriching – as students bring ideas that are fresh, new, outside - of - the-box and are grounded in the literature. For the students too, these projects present an amazing opportunity for learning as they get to experience very closely, the process of publishing a paper; from narrowing a broader research idea to a particular research question, to understanding the best methodology for it and then applying for a proposal, students become familiarized with the struggles of research.

There are, of course, challenges associated with such collaborations too. The students volunteer to work and I always try my best to never say no to any student who comes to me. However, sometimes it's hard for students to manage coursework and research work simultaneously, so sometimes they have a hard time meeting deadlines. This just provides another learning opportunity for the students and me. I try to find strengths in every student and help them recognize those and then together we try to divide tasks accordingly.

***Q. The course Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Inclusive Education were offered as elective course options for MPhil students. Could you elaborate on the teaching and pedagogical innovation that both entailed?***

Both courses are of unique nature because they offers an opportunity for the co-construction of knowledge for both

students and the instructor. The philosophy behind such a pedagogical approach is that no single person can have all the knowledge about a subject, thus knowledge can be constructed and brought forward by all. Students were invited to bring articles, videos and other sources of information to share and present to the class. I was pleasantly surprised by the enthusiasm of the students – the engagement was high throughout the class discussions and presentations. I believe this was because the students through the process gained ownership of the class. They felt valued and responsible for their own learning and that of others. Such an arrangement can be a little daunting for the instructor because by making such an arrangement you are doing away with the conventional power dynamics between the instructor and the students. Thus, the instructor needs to be secure in their own self otherwise they may feel vulnerable.

In ESD we also collaborated with other schools at LUMS to arrange guest lectures. We were honoured by Dr. Kamran Asdar Ali-Dean of the Mushtaq Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences (MGSHSS) delivering a lecture on social change in Pakistani context. Dr. Muhammad Abdul Rahman Malik-Assistant Professor from Suleman Dawood School of Business (SDSB) talked about change management in Pakistan's public sector organizations. While, Dr. Sanval Nasim- Assistant Professor from MGSHSS presented on contemporary environmental issues as seen through an economic lens, as well as our ecological footprint. Lastly we reached beyond LUMS connecting with Dr. Arjen Wals-UNESCO Chair of Social Learning and Sustainable Development via Skype to talk about objectives and outcomes of ESD and how to better implement them.

As a part of the Inclusive education course, a visit to Alhamra Arts Council was arranged to witness the Aut.Art exhibition curated by Mr. Inaam Zafar.

***The end goal should be to develop a learning community where everyone is welcomed and all members enrich and contribute to each other's learning."***

It exhibited the art collection of students that belonged to Oasis – a specialist school that catered to the needs of children with Autism. It was a wonderful opportunity for the fellows to witness the exhibition and hear the stories behind each painting.

**Q. *What are your aspirations for your students?***

I want to continue collaborating with students on research projects. Additionally, I would like to see the expansion of special interest groups (SIGs) to include faculty members not just from SOE but all of LUMS. Eventually, it would be great to expand this network across Pakistan and internationally as well. I would also like to encourage our students towards more student-led initiatives like conferences and seminars. The end goal should be to develop a learning community where everyone is welcomed and all members enrich and contribute to each other's learning.

### Designing and/or Reforming Large Systems by *Dr. Faisal Bari*

***About the Author: Dr Faisal Bari is currently serving as Director Academic Programs at School of Education and as Associate Professor of Economics and Education at LUMS, Lahore. He is a Senior Research Fellow at Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives (IDEAS).***

Punjab School Education Department (SED) employs some 390,000 teachers working in 52,000 odd schools spread over 36 districts of the province. Some of these teachers entered their job with pre-service training in education but many did not.

All of these teachers, irrespective of prior training, require continuous support and professional development. Pedagogies change, curricula change, subject knowledge changes and even if they do not, people need to learn new ways of doing things and, if nothing else, they need to refresh what they might have learned earlier every so often. The importance of teacher training/support is well established in education literature. This is especially true where teacher selection and/or reward/punishment mechanisms are weaker.

What sort of a teacher training and support system should SED develop?




While providing the requisite support to teachers, the system will need to be economical as well: the funding for education, though significant, is still very inadequate and the situation is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

There are certain constraints the system will have to deal with. Teachers need to be in schools and in their classes for most of the year. Training has to be delivered in a way that it does not take teachers away from their classes and/or schools for too long. Support has to be, more or less, continuous and cannot just be delivered through training programs conducted over summer vacations or other vacation breaks only. Ideally, the training should be customized to the needs of the individual teacher or it should come close to this ideal as much as possible. Training needs to be in sync with the academic calendar so that teachers are provided support in a timely manner.

With 52,000 schools and 390,000 teachers, and given the constraints mentioned above, what could be the contours of continuous professional development (CPD) system for teachers? This is a non-trivial policy problem for Punjab SED.





Historically, SED, through its Department for Staff Development (DSD), has relied on a cascade model for managing both induction training and CPD for teachers. DSD, based in Lahore, trains master trainers. These master trainers train a larger number of trainers who then train teachers and manage CPD in districts. The lowest tier of ‘trainer’ is at some cluster level that is above the school level and below the tehsil level.

This model has many issues. SED thinks it has not delivered the outcomes SED was looking for. It is also a very expensive model to maintain: thousands of trainers are needed. Expenses can be curtailed by employing more experienced and better teachers as trainers but this impacts the efficacy of the program as these trainers cannot then be pulled out of their jobs for longer or sustained periods.

Quality variance has been an issue as well. Recruiting, training and effectively deploying thousands of subject specialists and trainers has not been easy. Quality deteriorates as we go deeper in the cascade. How will teachers get effective support then? Could technology help? Technology can reach teachers easily and cost-effectively and without removing them from their schools. It can also deliver, via tablets and even on mobile phones, quality assured products across the system. But how does SED manage teacher incentives to ensure technology provided solutions are optimally utilized. And what sort of field support is needed to deliver such a model of blended learning?

This is just one example of the kind of policy issues that we grapple with in education in Pakistan. Our aim, as researchers who focus on policy issues, is to look for viable solutions that can be implemented in our context.

***“Pedagogies change, curricula change, subject knowledge changes and even if they do not, people need to learn new ways of doing things and, if nothing else, they need to refresh what they might have learned earlier every so often.”***

### Dr. Werner Zorman: Connecting with SOE



***Werner Zorman is the Associate Professor and Annenberg Chair of Leadership at Harvey Mudd College, USA. Before he joined Harvey Mudd, he was the Associate Director of Leadership Programs at Cornell's College of Engineering, the USA from 2012 to 2016. In addition to teaching classes on leadership, communication, and team-building skills, he researches leadership education and facilitates leadership development as well.***

*Interviewed by Hamna Tariq*

**Q:** Please tell us about your academic and professional background.

I have had a very unorthodox way of going to college and then graduating. When I was 15 years old I left school and received vocational training as a telecommunication technician. At 18 years old I started working for a government-owned telecommunication organization and between ages 18 and 23 I was working all day and in the evenings went to high school. I finished college at 30 which is pretty late compared to the age when an average person graduates.

Then I immediately joined Nokia and worked as a Software Engineer but only for a year. They quickly moved me to a project management position because I was good with customer interface and managing other people. This was all still in Austria - my home country. Then I moved further up the career ladder to the point where I was managing managers which is a different responsibility because then I was managing leaders so I had to help them become better leaders rather than better engineers and that was the time when I relocated to the USA in 2002 and since then I have been in the USA. Although only 5% of my responsibility was to coach and help my people become better at leadership but that's really what I loved most. Therefore, during my last three years at Nokia, I got much more involved in designing and delivering leadership programs and training.

***“When you have a vision even difficult challenges seem possible to overcome because people collectively and proactively fight for the bigger purpose that brought them together.”***

**Q:** What was the reason behind switching from corporate sector to academia?

I prefer fewer rules and bureaucracy and have an entrepreneurial mindset so the more flexible the organization the better. I decided to make this shift after Nokia merged with Siemens. Nokia is a Finnish company which has a very open-minded culture and less hierarchy. Siemens, however, is a German company which is very process controlled and rigid. I didn't like that so I decided to leave the company. Then I started my own company in leadership development called 'Connected Leadership'. The same year, I got an offer from Cornell University, USA to teach leadership to engineering students. I remained there for four years, teaching leadership and teamwork to engineering students. Later, I got an offer from Harvey Mudd College, USA where I'm currently working as an Associate professor and also designed their leadership program.

**Q:** How do you define leadership and do you have any formal training in leadership?

According to me, a leader is someone who has a vision about something which needs to change in the world, they have the capacity to inspire people to become part of their cause and they help others in achieving what they're trying to achieve collectively.

Everything I know about leadership, I learned it through practical experience and reading books. I would read a book and then go deeper into the references, so I started to get deeper into psychology as well because leadership is a lot about interpersonal skills and that goes into how people interact with each other. It is all self-studied. I never had any official degree in leadership. I did my Masters in Computer Sciences.

**Q:** What is the most difficult challenge people face in exercising leadership?

Leadership challenges can be categorized as technical and non-technical. Tasks like project management, strategic thinking, solving problems, being analytical are all technical and as it turns out these are not the hard problems. I think the hard problem is what I call the 'people problem' which is the non-technical part. People are creatures of mind and emotions and they are often treated by leaders as if they are only creatures of the mind. Leaders think that you just have to be reasonable and then everything is going to happen. It is not, because people are emotional, they feel offended easily. People are messy and that, for me, is the hard problem and the most difficult challenge leaders face.

**Q:** Is there a specific skill set that every leader must have?

The skill-set required for every leader falls under the umbrella of emotional intelligence (EQ). The four skills that I think you have to develop are: (1) Self-awareness: understanding one's own thinking and emotions, (2) Self-regulation: finding ways of quickly getting a hold of oneself and one's emotions. I don't think self-regulation means that one can prevent emotions from happening, rather it is about working through emotions quickly, (3) Social Awareness: getting good at understanding the other person's, their triggers and root causes because then one engages with the person accordingly, and (4) Relationship Management: influencing people's behaviors and emotions and staying connected with them so that one can collectively work towards a bigger cause.



**Q:** Over the past year, what has your engagement with SOE entailed?

I was initially mostly engaged with Dr. Tahir Andrabi, Dean SOE, and Dr. Mariam Chughtai, Associate Dean and Assistant Professor SOE. With Dr. Mariam, I was engaged throughout her leadership course and I was a soundboard to bounce ideas off. We both learned a lot by working through the challenges faced during the leadership course. I had discussions with Dean Andrabi on a more strategic level. As for the past three weeks that I have been in Pakistan I think I have come to understand the overall program much better now. I got a chance to understand team dynamics at SOE, talk one on one with faculty, administration and students and also hold a focus group discussion with the students to understand what went well and what could be improved. After my interactions, I see there is a high level of passion at SOE and collectively the team is performing quite well which is really important. The outcome of my three weeks at SOE will be an assessment report of what worked well and recommendations on what can be improved.

**Q:** What is your advice for the next year to the first batch of SOE?

Before the start of Fall'19 semester students will receive surveys to announce their career interests so hopefully students have some sense of what they want to do that is going to be an important survey to fill out because that is going to inform the faculty what would be a good project to work on for each student. So my first advice is to take it seriously.

Secondly, during the pro-seminar students will still be at SOE so they'll have the support of advisors in developing the plan for the practicum. For project teams, Dr. Tahir and Dr. Mariam are going to have an additional aspect leadership training especially focused on working through team

challenges. So my second advice is to put a lot of effort into understanding the team dynamics, and how to take lead collectively to be most effective training especially focused on working through team challenges. So my second advice is to put a lot of effort into understanding the team dynamics, and how to take lead collectively to be most effective.

Lastly, the practicum in last semester is an opportunity to work with the partner organisations. During this time students will also start seeking out jobs. What you are already going to be doing with the partner organisation can be put into your resume. Every interview is a behavioral interview so students will have all the stories from practical experience which they should use wisely because those are what are going to get you a job because people look for experience.

**Q:** What do you envision as a successful outcome of this MPhil ELM program?

It goes back to how I define leadership. A successful outcome would be for the graduating class to have a vision about what they want to impact, know what it will take for the vision to come true, stay resilient in the face of challenges and find ways to engage and inspire other people to be part of their cause. When you have a vision even difficult challenges seem possible to overcome because people collectively and proactively fight for the bigger purpose that brought them together. That, I feel, would be a successful outcome of this program.

## Critical Approaches in Art Education

Author: Hamna Tariq

***"Individuals learn to see the world when they draw."***



On February 13, 2019, a seminar was held hosting Mr. Imran Ahmad Khan on exploring art and education with SOE faculty, staff, and students.

Imran Ahmad Khan is a self-taught artist who is currently working at Beaconhouse National University (BNU). He joined the institute as a studio technician and went on to teach in the Art department. He is an internationally recognized artist who has presented his exhibitions in many countries including Pakistan, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and India.

Mr. Imran started the seminar by talking about the influence of his experiences, as a young boy in the city of Lahore. From being a primary school drop-out to teaching faculty at BNU, his experiences set the ground for his phenomenal work and continued to be a source of inspiration for the methods and techniques used in his work. Mr. Imran spent his early years at the National Museum of Science and Technology, Lahore that led him to experiment with sound and kinetic installation which has become the hallmark of his work. Mr. Imran says, "the city is my studio" and the ideas for his work come from the paradoxes that he observes in the society. Imran Ahmad Khan's work so far has been a commentary on socio-political issues, and he is devoted to exposing

the anomalies which exist around us all. His contribution to Pakistan and the art community is the infusion of Science, Technology, and Art to produce work that is accessible to the public. According to him, his focus is on simplicity, which is grounded in the culture and the time in which society exists. His work 'Implode' was a piece of evidence to this statement which was inspired by the irony of an arms dealer and a medical store running their businesses side by side.

Mr. Imran highlighted that his philosophy behind the teaching of Art was to provide avenues for the natural artist within individuals to come out. According to Mr. Imran, the teaching of Art should evolve as society evolves. On teaching Art in primary school, Mr. Imran said that the infusion of technology and art would be ideal. Within the education space, Mr. Imran recognized the lack of public space for art and artistic mentality to flourish through which we explore other subjects, especially within education.

Mr. Imran ended the seminar by talking about the purpose of art as a tool for bringing awareness about the realities of life and he gave hope by talking about his ongoing work on designing a program to bring art into education.

# Disrupting Education? Experimental Evidence on Technology-Aided Instruction in India

*Author: Haris Hameed*

A video conference was held at SOE on March 26, 2019. The guest speaker was Dr. Abhijeet Singh, Assistant Professor of Economics at the Stockholm School of Economics. The idea behind this conference was to discuss the methodology and findings of his paper, “Disrupting Education? Experimental Evidence on Technology-Aided Instruction in India”. He also shared details on Mindspark which is a technology aided project that promises to improve the education system.



Mindspark is a computer-based, adaptive-learning program that helps a child to improve his/her skills in Maths and English. It allows each student to follow a learning path that is based on their current level and at a pace they are comfortable with. With the help of this program, specialized curriculums are designed as per individual's understanding, at a pace he or she is comfortable with. This program is designed after carrying out intensive research on student's performance, to discover the different learning patterns among children. The research paper is designed on an experimental method where technology is used as an after-school aid in learning Maths and language.

Use of technology at public sector raised pertinent questions related to the implementation of this plan and how the idea should be promulgated in the government sector. However, it ended on a very positive note opening new horizons over implementation of policy and how few ideas need more attention and detail. Through this event, SOE got a new mentor and a friend to whom students and faculty are looking forward to collaborate on future projects.



# Noor Gah: An Educational Initiative

Author: Hina Yousuf Baltistani

Fatimah Tariq Atta, an MPhil scholar at SOE-LUMS, is the Founder and Manager of Noor Gah, a non-profit school for underprivileged children in Lahore. The school was established in 2016 and currently caters to 90 students from Kindergarten to Grade 4.

While sharing her journey, Fatimah talked about how, after completing her BA-LLB from LUMS, she felt the need to make a positive impact on society, which gave birth to the idea of Noor Gah.

Apart from regular academics, Noor Gah follows a curriculum that focuses on the holistic development of students by promoting arts and crafts, sports, regular discussions on global issues as well as activity-based learning. Fatimah personally trains the teachers and hopes to improve the quality of instruction through organising regular professional development sessions for the teaching staff at Noor Gah.

Fatimah's long-term vision for the school is to uplift children from neglected areas by taking them in as students and taking ownership for their learning and holistic development. She believes that using her position of privilege to play a positive role in creating a better future for her students is her true calling and passion that drives her each passing day

In her first year as a student of MPhil ELM, Fatimah talks about how she has grown as a manager and has learned to prioritize certain aspects of learning over others. She hopes that the MPhil ELM degree will equip her with a better understanding of school effectiveness and strategic management through which she wishes to carry forward and sustain her initiative in the long term.



***“ I wanted to make a positive impact in society by playing my role, in creating a better tomorrow. I started Noor Gah with seven students in one classroom and hired a single teacher to assist me in running the school. It was a small step but it felt right.”***

# Khokha Natak- Street Theatre Experience at LUMS

*Author: Hina Yousuf Baltistani*

Waqas Manzoor, an MPhil ELM student at SOE, has worked in collaboration with the Gurmani Centre of Literature and Languages at MGHSS to introduce a unique theatre inspired experience, called 'Khoka Natak'. What makes the experience exciting is that it transforms the khoka into a performative space, and prods students out of their modes of casual interaction. Waqas brought his versatile experience as a theatre artist, having previously worked on several productions, and now aiming to bring street theatre to the fold of LUMS.

Waqas is deeply interested in reshaping the notion that good theatrical performance needs to be backed up by the mechanical functions of the stage. He believes that uninhibited expression is the essence of theatre and hopes that Khoka Natak will continue to flourish over the years.

Khoka Natak's first performance was an enactment and recitation of Faiz Ahmed Faiz's 'Subh-e-Azadi' because Waqas believes that Faiz's work captures the true, unrestrained spirit of street theatre. One of the spectators, Musharafa Shah (MGHSS), Batch, 2021 shared that "Khokha Natak is a refresher for me. The content is very thought-provoking." While Amna Mazhar, Batch 2021, shared that "Khokha Natak has made the street plays accessible. The actors are really good and I really enjoy their roles.

It is Waqas's belief education is incomplete without arts. According to him dramatics, arts, music, and dance deal with multiple themes of humanity, such as inculcating empathy, courage, and citizenship. He is, therefore, a strong advocate for bringing about education reform through promoting arts in education. Waqas is working hard to create opportunities for all and his philosophy is to work on developing the emotional intelligence of students. He is positive that SOE-LUMS will enable him to actualize his vision for education reform through the study of Arts in Education.



# Aut Art-Exhibition

Author: Jannat Karim Khan

SOE arranged for the class of their course titled Inclusive Education to attend a unique exhibition, called 'Aut. Art'. The exhibition featured artistic work of 12 children on the Autism spectrum and belonged to Oasis – a specialist school that caters to the needs of children with Autism.

As if art painted by young children was not genius enough, there was more; these were not ordinary children, they were extraordinary. As I walked towards Alhamra hall I did not know what to expect. As someone who is relatively familiar with Autism, I was excited about the possibilities and yet anxious as well. When I entered, I was speechless. Surrounding were rows upon rows of paintings, columns stacked up high to the ceiling. Each painting was so unique and a narrative amongst the others as well.

Some of these works were made by children as young as 7 years old. The age ranged from 7 to 14, with one boy being above the age bracket. What was even more mind-blowing was that the color selection and palette, and stroke style were all decided by children. Some of these canvases took months to complete and were painted through multiple 15 minute sessions. There was so much consistency across works that felt like paintings were done in one sitting. To our surprise, those paintings were done over the span of years. Overall it represented the children: children who are unique and beautiful and brilliant who do not need to be moulded into society's definition of 'normal' because they are beyond the limitations placed on children by the society.



This artwork was curated by Mr Inaam Zafar who is a BFA (Visual Arts) from Beaconhouse National University, Lahore. Mr Zafar aims to understand the role of art institutions in the growth of an artist. He tries to explore how art education and training impacts the creativity and thought process of an individual which was also the focus of this exhibition.



# Educational Tour: Syedan Wala Higher Secondary School, Kasur

*Author: Haris Hamid*



SOE team visited the Syedanwala Higher Secondary School in Kasur on April 5, 2019. The school is supported by the Syed Babar Ali Foundation that provides its residents access to affordable world-class high-quality education amidst the village of Syedan Wala near Kasur.

The Syedanwala Higher Secondary School has well-equipped labs, a committed teaching faculty, and an inspiring academic environment. The school also provides vocational training to equip its students with the practical skills that will benefit them in their professional career. For example, boys have the opportunity to polish their skills on mechanical, electrical and wood-work giving them hands on experience on building projects. We were also given the opportunity to observe the beautiful calligraphy done by the female students.

The visit was a great opportunity for SOE MPhil students, faculty and staff members to visit the school premises, interact with the students and staff and learn about the vision of the school from its founder. Interesting discussion around sticking to tradition, changing mindset on building creativity and equipping students with practical skills took place during the visit

## Semester Break: Get Together

*Author: Rukhsar Fatima*

On March 1, 2019, SOE organized an outdoor party in the LUMS cricket ground for the students to get a break from the strenuous routine of assignments and exams. SOE faculty and staff added an extra zing to the celebration by participating in the games and activities. Different games like dodge the ball, tug of war, volleyball were played.

To revisit our childhood, some traditional games like pithu kol karam and kho kho were also played. Highlight of the day was witnessing Dean of SOE Dr Tahir Andrabi compete against his students in a traditional game called kho kho. The celebration was joined by Mrs. Shaila Andrabi, wife of Dean Andrabi, administration and faculty members SOE, LUMS.

This gave an opportunity to students to de-stress from the exam routine and network with the faculty members in fun activities and building long-lasting relationships with their peers and faculty.



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**Hina Sohail**

*"Don't panic about your grades in the first semester. It will hugely affect your ability to learn and be critical. Make sure you participate in everything and stay away from drama as there will be a lot in the first semester."*



**Haris Abdul Hamid**

*"Everyone brings their unique self to the classroom. So be yourself and make most of this time because this will be the time where most of the change might occur."*

**Maryam Mohsin**

*"Welcome to SOE! Well, class participation (CP) is a big deal in most of the courses not only for the grades but also to be able to share thoughts and listen. My advice to you is to participate in the class as much as possible because this is one of the most effective ways of learning here. Also, group study is extremely beneficial, so make sure to spend a lot of time with your batch mates. Best of luck!"*



**Afreen Kamran**

*"Take it easy. Read and note your reflections on the assigned readings. Participate in the class actively and don't forget to enjoy LUMS while you study."*



**Fatima Faisal Hayat**

*Be regular. Emergences can wait; LUMS can not :)*



**Ahsan Nazir**

*"Being at SOE will be one of the most exciting journeys of your life. It is a place where you can achieve your true potential, a place where you can realize your dreams. Do sign up for workshops and seminars especially EduSpeaks. These experiences, and many others you will have during your time here, will give you a platform to expand your knowledge and learn from others."*







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